

Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9886

INFO USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, MORG, HO

SUBJECT: REACTION TO GOH CHANGES

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 1661

1. NEWSPAPER AND RADIO COMMENTARY ABOUT THE UB SCANDAL AND GENERAL LOPEZ IS DIMINISHING AS THE NEW GOVERNMENT OCCUPIES THE NATION'S ATTENTION. THE NEW COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IS RECEIVING A MIXED BAG OF PRAISE AND CRITICISM. CONSERVATIVE LA PRENSA OF APRIL 25 DEVOTES ITS LEAD EDITORIAL TO ITS CURRENT FAVORITE SUBJECT, THE DEPARTURE OF THE "POPULIST MINISTERS." LA PRENSA EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE NEW COUNCIL. IN CONTRAST RADIO COMMENTATOR NAPOLEON MAIRENA SAID THAT THE NEW MINISTERS ARE VERY INEXPERIENCED AND THAT THEY WILL HAVE TO BE TRAINED.

2. THE OPPORTUNISTIC EL CRONISTA OF APRIL 25 NOTES

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THAT THE HONDURAN PEOPLE ARE PLEASED WITH THE NEW GOVERN-

MENT OF COLONEL MELGAR BUT STATED THAT THOSE GUILTY OF
BRIBERY WOULD ESCAPE PUNISHMENT COMPLETELY.

3. LIBERAL TIEMPO'S LEAD EDITORIAL OF APRIL 25 SAID THAT
ALTHOUGH THE FINDINGS OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE ARE
NOT YET KNOWN THE OUSTER OF LOPEZ IS THE FINAL POLITICAL
RESULT OF THE SCANDAL. TIEMPO URGES THAT THE INCIDENT
RESULT IN A BROAD INVESTIGATION INTO ALL THE GOVERNMENTS'S
BUSINESS AND THAT THE INVESTIGATION NOT BE LIMITED TO
JUST UB OR TO THE GOH RELATIONSHIP TO MILTINATIONAL
COMPANIES.

4. TIEMPO ALSO REPORTED THAT EX-FONMIN CESAR BATRES,
VICENTE WILLIAMS, GUILLERMO BUESO, AND COLONEL JOSE JORGE SOLORANO
HAD BEEN NAMED AS ADVISORS TO CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR. THERE
HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT
CONCERNING THESE APPOINTMENTS.

5. THE HONDURAN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE COUNCIL (COHEP),
FOLLOWING A MEETING TO ANALYZE THE COUNTRY'S CURRENT SITU-
ATION, HAS ISSUED A DECLARATION WHOSE POINTS INCLUDE:

A) COHEP SUPPORTS THE ACTIONS THUS FAR TAKEN BY THE ARMED
FORCES;

B) COHEP EMPHASIZES THE NEED TO CARRY OUT AN AGRARIAN
REFORM PROGRAM DIRECTED TOWARD JUSTICE FOR ALL CITIZENS
AND THE EXPANSION OF THE ECONOMY; AND

C) AT NO OTHER TIME IN HONDURAN HISTORY HAS THERE BEEN A
GREATER NEED FOR A CREWTIVE AND FRATERNAL SPIRIT; THERE-
FORE, COHEP BELIEVES THAT THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL SECTORS
IN NATIONAL LIFE IS INDISPENSABLE.

6. COMMENT: IF THE PRESS CAN BE USED AS A PROPER INDICATOR,
THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN HONDURAS IS RETURNING TO NORMAL.
TIEMPO OF APRIL 25 ACCEPTS LOOPEZ' GUILT AS DO APPARENTLY
MANY OTHER HONDURANS. THERE EXISTS LITTLE OPPOSITION TO
THE NAMING OF MELGAR AS CHIEF OF STATE AND MOST SECTORS OF
SOCIETY APPARENTLY WISH HIS GOVERNMENT WELL. ALTHOUGH THE
PREVALENT VIEW IS THAT THE NEW COUNCIL OF MINISTERS LACKS
EXPERIENCE, THERE ALSO EXISTS A WILLINGNESS TO GIVE
THE MINISTERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVE THEMSELVES. THERE IS
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VERY LITTLE COVERAGE OF THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE'S
ACTIVITIES IN THE U.S., PROBABLY BECAUSE OF A DEARTH OF
INFORMATION FROM THE U.S. LOPEZ HAS VIRTUALLY DISAPPEARED
FROM THE PAPERS WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT FEUH (UNIVERSITY
STUDENT ASSOCIATION) HAS CALLED FOR HIM TO BE SUBJECTED TO
THE APPROPRIATE LEGAL PENALTIES.
RUMORS THAT LOPEZ HAS FLED
THE COUNTRY HAVE GROWN SO PERSISTENT THAT ON APRIL 23 THE

ARMED FORCES ISSUED A BULLETIN SAYING THAT HE IS AT HOME
WHERE HE "ENJOYS ALL THE RIGHTS OF A CITIZEN." THE BULLETIN
ASKED THE PRESS NOT TO REPEAT RUMORS OF HIS DEPARTURE WITHOUT
CHECKING WITH THE AUTHORITIES.
SANCHEZ

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